REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-3 are allowed and Claims 4-8 stand rejected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the present rejections in view of the remarks contained herein.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Enyedy et al. (U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,938,949, and 5,796,067) in view of Scheller (U.S. Pat. No. 2,685,631). The Outstanding Office Action states that Enyedy et al. teaches the claimed subject matter except for showing use of a gas controller on the handle to control gas flow to the torch and hence the gas pressure, whereas Scheller teaches a gas control via barrel B, which effects a local gas control of pressure. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections in light of the following remarks.

Claim 5 requires a gas control device for controlling the supply of gas to a plasma arc chamber to allow gas pressure to build up local to the torch head. Similarly, Claims 6-8 require a step of building up or maintaining gas pressure local to the torch for supply to a plasma arc chamber of the plasma arc torch.

Enyedy et al. and Scheller cannot render these claims obvious since neither of these references teach or suggest a gas control device or method that controls the supply of gas to a plasma arc chamber to allow gas pressure to build up local to a torch head. As acknowledged by the allowance of Claims 1-3, Enyedy does not control the flow of gas into the plasma arc chamber and thus does not control the supply of gas to

a plasma arc chamber to allow gas pressure to build up local to a torch head. Scheller cannot provide any motivation to provide the claimed gas control because there is no mention of a gas control whatsoever throughout the specification, let alone gas control for the supply of gas to a plasma arc chamber to allow gas pressure to build up local to a torch head.

More specifically, Scheller discloses a gas conduit in the handle G, through the barrel B, and to the nozzle N (col. 2, lines 36-39). The barrel B defines a constant diameter bore as illustrated in Fig. 2, and the barrel B "has a **continuous** gas passage from the interior of the torch head H to the interior of the nozzle N." (Col. 2, lines 4-6 and 37-39). *[Emphasis Added].* As such, the barrel B is not, and cannot be, a gas control device that controls the supply of gas to a plasma arc chamber to allow gas pressure to build up local to a torch head. The barrel B is merely a conduit for the supply of shielding gas, not a gas control device for plasma gas into a plasma arc chamber. Therefore, Claims 5-8 cannot be obvious and Applicants respectfully request that these claim rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is

respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7524.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 05 DEC 05

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